

RURAL LIFE

252 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

AUGUST, 1954

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne,
for transmission by post as a
newspaper.

1/- Monthly

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT

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*"To Restore
Christ to The
Countryside
To Restore
The Countryside
to Christ"*



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RURAL LIFE

ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL
CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT

An Australian monthly devoted to the building of the Australian way of life on a rural foundation. An Australian monthly which believes that this end can be achieved only by the rebuilding of rural communities on a basis of positive, active and dynamic Christianity. An Australian monthly determined to fight every attempt to disrupt the rural way of living.

Address all communications to the Managing Editor, "Rural Life", 252 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

Distributed to all financial members of the N.C.R.M.

AUGUST, 1954

EDITORIAL—

The Red Shadow

SUFFICIENT time has elapsed since the tragic partition of Vietnam and the consequent handing over of another million and more Christians to the tyranny and terror of Communism, for the true implications to register on the minds of many hitherto heedless Australians.

THE blunt truth is that the Red Shadow of International Communism has stretched out further, reaching inexorably in the direction of Australia.

FOR the first time, after years of unheeded warnings given by a comparatively small group of realistic Australians, the nation is showing signs of becoming alarmed at the prospect of a southward march of a militant and aggressive Asian Communism.

SOUTH East Asia has become one of the critical danger spots in the world. The uneasy peace negotiated at Geneva recently is no more than a temporary truce. It may last a year. It may last a number of years. But always looming like a sinister and threatening shadow, is the implication that the Communist front line will be extended southward whenever the planners in Moscow and Peking decide the time is opportune. This is the grim lesson that Australia must learn and act upon. The writing could not be presented more clearly. Only deluded fools would pretend to see otherwise.

IN effect, notice has been served on Australia. Indo-China is merely the first link in the chain that extends to this country. Communist Imperialism knows no artificially imposed barriers. Geared to a time table of ultimate world conquest it must, of

its very nature, continue to grow and expand, swallowing more countries in its advance, enslaving more millions in its foul embrace, blotting out freedom with the shadow of its savage inhumanity.

IT is time for the creating of a new national unity designed to prepare the country for all eventualities. Disunity, lack of morale, indecision, preoccupation with unessentials and an unwillingness to face up to the challenge implicit in the current situation can only result in eventual tragedy for the nation.

THE national outlook, however, is the reflection of the attitude of the sum total of individuals who make up the nation.

IF individuals and organisations shirk the tasks and obligations imposed on them by the necessities of the moment then it is too much to expect the nation as a whole to rise to the challenge.

N.C.R.M. members can be expected to show the same clarity of thought, singleness of purpose and resoluteness of character which have always distinguished them when called upon to make a special effort for God and for Australia

"An Engineer's Vision"

IN this issue we are pleased to feature a contributed article of more than average length dealing in the main, with Australia's potential development.

THE author sets forth ways and means of achieving a desirable pattern of development on a basis of closer settlement.

MANY of the ideas contained therein will be familiar enough to regular readers of "Rural Life".

POSSIBLY some are encountered for the first time. Certainly some are controversial. All are worth wide debate.

PRECISELY because ideas are debatable we think they should be debated.

IT is for this reason we are presenting Mr. McDonald's long article in its entirety and without any editorial pruning.

AT the same time an invitation is extended to readers to submit any comments they desire to make on the contents of the article. Do you find yourself sharing the author's vision of what can be done in developing Australia? Or do you subscribe to a different version of an Australian dream?

"RURAL LIFE" would be interested to hear and thousands of fellow Australians likewise share an interest in what readers are really thinking.

Farm future seen as very bright

In the next generation Australia should see an unprecedented volume of agricultural production and a greater farm community, the chairman of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Sir Ian Clunies Ross, said recently.

Although agriculture would be faced with a host of new disease problems over the next 20 years, the future was very bright.

Australia had not even begun to measure the vast potential of its agricultural production.

Sir Ian was delivering the theme address at the 30th State Congress of the Agricultural Bureau, which opened at Hawkesbury Agricultural College.

Sir Ian said that looking back on the tremendous development in agriculture in recent years, some people were tempted to think we had "broken the back" of most of the problems, and could now slacken our efforts and let farming procedure catch up with research.

Research

"Scientific research must be expanded and intensified if the full potential for production is to be exploited", he said.

"We have as yet barely begun the development of more productive strains of grasses and legumes, or of those capable of extending the range of pasture-improvement into tropical and semi-arid areas.

"Old diseases continue to exact their toll, while new problems are bound to arise.

"We are, beyond any question, going to have a host of new disease problems over the next 20 years because of the changes we are making.

"You can't take indifferent and poor soil and turn it into productive pasture without real problems, because of the increasing demands you are making on the soil.

Salaries

"I am convinced that we haven't really begun. We have only got the bare bones of the problems solved."

He said that provided adequate trained staff could be obtained, and research and extension continued on an increased scale, the future of Australian agriculture was very bright.

He urged that conditions be made more attractive for trained scientific workers, and said there was a grave danger that students would be deterred from agricultural science by the poor salaries.

"The limits of production can be incalculably larger than anyone realises at present", he said.

"In the next generation we should see an unprecedented volume of agricultural production, and a greater farm community."

High Quality Wheat

The Director of Agriculture for South Australia, Dr. A. R. Callaghan, who was presented with the Farrer Memorial Medal for distinguished service in agricultural science, gave this year's memorial oration on quality in the Australian wheat crop.

Dr. Callaghan said that if the Australian producer of high quality wheat were to be rewarded for quality, it was necessary to consider separating quality lines from the standard f.a.q. (fair average quality).

"This can be done without prejudice to the value of the Australian f.a.q. on the conventional market, where high baking quality is not essential", he said.

"The retention of the f.a.q. for conventional trading purposes appears to be desirable, but Australia should establish a strong white class, as distinct from f.a.q., to meet new and potential markets for white wheat of high baking quality.

"If we are going to try to sell on other, more discriminating markets, we must produce for them."

Fertility

Maintenance of a permanent standard class of high quality would depend on general soil fertility levels, which would have to be raised in many areas, he said.

Areas such as Queensland, which produced high quality wheat, would have to maintain their soil fertility to hold the higher quality.

We have advanced by the efforts of our plant breeders so that high quality no longer means low yields", he said.

"The time is now propitious to think in terms of marketing at least some of our wheat on a quality basis."

Marketing Methods Call for Careful Presentation

The contraction of various traditional markets for Australian primary products has raised the question of finding outlets for our surplus production in other directions.

Densely populated Asian countries have always offered a theoretical solution to the vexed problem of markets, but a big gap exists between an effective demand at the moment, and some hypothetical demand of the future when purchasing power of these nations has been stepped up.

However, when Australia stands in danger of losing some of her Asian markets because of her own mistakes, it is high time a more critical approach was made to this subject.

Danish butter is establishing a reputation for good packing, in addition to being cheaper.

General retail price for New Zealand and Australian butter is approximately 8/- per pound sterling, while Danish butter retails at about 7/2 sterling.

The above facts emphasise the need for an insistence on quality and greater care in the presentation of primary exports.

How to do it

In pleasant contrast to the Japanese story is that of Queensland's developing ghee exports. Ghee is almost pure butter-fat, and is the form in which butter-fat is used in many tropical countries.

Developed since the war, the industry is showing rapid advances, and has already captured 80 per cent. of the Malayan trade. A market has been opened up in 20 tropical and sub-tropical countries and centres.

Attractively presented in gleaming green and silver cans, it is selling well on its own merits.

There is an obvious lesson to be learned from these contrasting facts. On a strongly competitive market, quality and price are always the two factors which either sponsor or retard sales depending on the commodity itself.

How not to do it

The export of butter to Japan provides an illustration of how not to handle an export commodity.

Consumption of imported dairy products is reported to be steadily increasing in Japan. However, at a time when the Australian dairy industry is being confronted with big marketing problems, there is another report to the effect that Australian butter is being regarded with some suspicion.

This arises out of the fact that one-third of a recent shipment of Australian butter was found to be badly tainted.

It is claimed that Australian butter has been displaced from its original position of Japan's favorite as a result of this incident, and the bad packing, which is general. New Zealand butter now gets first preference, while

Dr. Sutton's Plan for Raising Wheat Quality

Writing in "The West Australian" recently, Dr. G. L. Sutton, noted authority on wheat qualities, claimed that Australia needs a stronger quality wheat to retain markets.

Dr. Sutton said that the advent of Farrer's Federation wheat ushered in a new and second era for the Australian wheat industry, an era of higher yields and few crop failures. Wheat became a staple crop and Australia one of the great wheat-producing countries of the world and noted for unexcelled characteristics of whiteness, dryness, and the high flour yield of its wheat. Its wheat was still of low baking quality; Farrer's ideal of yield and quality combined in the same variety had not yet been realised. This had to await the coming of the third era of quality; it came towards the end of the first half of the present century.

Thanks to the wheat breeders, successors to those of Farrer's generation, varieties like Gabo, Eureka, Wongoondy and Kondut have been produced which not only yield well but also have better baking quality than the standard varieties of the Farrer era just closed.

New Slogan

The era now beginning is one of wheat quality, and Australian wheat growers are becoming "wheat quality" conscious. This is because they have found that their quality wheats yield just as well as the standard weaker ones and pay better when it is possible to sell them to appreciative buyers. "Payment for Quality" has therefore become their slogan.

With the changing times, new marketing methods are indicated. Some flourmillers have done much to bring about "Payment for Quality." This season in W.A. some 230,000 bushels have been paid for on the basis of quality. The premiums paid ranged from a few pence to 1/3 a bushel with an average rate of 10.3d, and amounting in the aggregate to about £10,000. In New South Wales payments for quality were much greater. Premiums were paid on some 5,250,000 bushels. They ranged from 2d. to 3/1 a bushel with an average of nearly 1/4 and in the aggregate exceeded £300,000.

Task for Leaders

Some millers, in co-operation with the growers, have done all that is possible to advance the sensible and modern principle of "Payment for Quality", but the extent of their success is necessarily limited. This is because it is not possible in these days on controlled marketing for individuals to do all that is desirable in this direction.

Obviously, it is therefore now the duty and responsibility, as it is the privilege, of the growers' leaders, who have been entrusted with the marketing of Australian wheat, to recognise the importance of the modern principle of "Payment for Quality" and to take steps to extend the success which has attended individual efforts so that all growers producing the stronger varieties may benefit.

Reluctance

Dr. Sutton said there are several reasons why the marketing leaders have not already made "Payment for Quality" general throughout Australia. One is a reluctance to depart from the practice of selling Australian wheat on its average quality. This practice was eminently satisfactory when practically all the wheat grown was of the same low strength type. But the persistence of such a practice implies failure to recognise that a new era in Australian wheat production has arisen because of the success of modern wheat breeders in developing stronger high yielding varieties which are more profitable when sold in the right quarters.

A second reason was a belief that the non-inclusion of the new stronger wheats with the older, weaker ones would injure the sale of Australian wheat in export markets. This illusion was entirely squashed by a memorandum written by Mr. Ralph Tadman in September last. Because of its exceptional milling characteristics, there will always be an export demand for low strength Australian wheat when markets are normal.

On Quality

A third reason was a belief that there was no export market for this stronger Australian wheat. This belief has been entirely dispelled by the information gained by the delegation from the Australian Wheat Board which visited South Africa and South East Asia with the object of selling Australian wheat. Mr. C. T. Chapman, the South Australian representative on the A.W.B., is emphatic that the strength of Australian wheat

must be lifted if these near Eastern markets are to be retained. This delegation also learnt that those interested in the purchase of Australian wheat had equipped themselves with instruments for testing the quality of the wheat and flour they purchased. It is thus obvious that they intend in the future to buy "on quality" and not according to a vague designation known as the f.a.q. standard.

Two Pools

A fourth reason is a conservative reluctance to make a change from a practice which has served well under the old conditions but which under the new ones is no longer satisfactory. The essential marketing change will involve the operation of two pools concurrently in the same season; this is not as simple as mixing together the wheat in both pools and operating one. This, however, is not a valid reason for adopting the simpler method when modern developments even make the more difficult method the more desirable.

The methods adopted in N.S.W. and W.A. have been useful, but are too limited to be satisfactory. That in N.S.W. is possible only because of the wheat being in bags. In W.A. the many arbitrations are indications that the method is unsatisfactory. Some more satisfactory plan applicable to wherever bag or bulk handling is in operation is necessary.

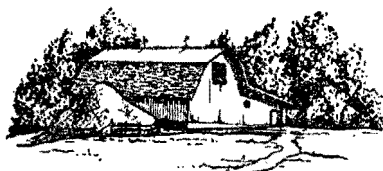
The selection of the stronger wheat cannot be made by looking at it: it can be done only as the result of a simple and rapid test. All the facilities for making this test are available in the laboratory of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd.—a growers' organisation—as are also those for conducting more elaborate but unnecessary tests.

I have suggested, Dr. Sutton said, that wheat of approved varieties grown under suitable conditions should be received into a second pool. This wheat on receipt at depots would require to be sampled and a sample sent to a central office for testing. At the time of receipt the grower would be entitled to receive the same advance a bushel as those whose wheat was taken into the first pool but subject later to an extra payment for quality in accordance with its relative strength as disclosed by the test. Each parcel of wheat as sold would also be tested by an authority satisfactory to the millers and the marketing authorities and paid for according to a schedule of graduated strength values, preferably in accordance with a pre-arranged scale.

Difficulties

The premiums received for the wheat would be paid to the credit of the second pool and later, by simple accountancy methods, distributed to the suppliers on an equitable pro rata basis according to the quantity supplied and its relative strength.

(Continued on Page 15)



KATH McCORMACK CONTINUES HER STORY ON . . .

The Migrant Christening

As you may, or may not, remember, Disaster struck. We arrived at early Mass to find a strange car at the Sacristy door.

As we, the Brocklesby members of the congregation, regarded it with mounting apprehension, we were told it was Monsignor Larkins' car. The 'flu, that non-respecter of persons, had caught up with the parish priest. I regret to say that our first reaction was not one of sympathy for the victim, but "What about our Baptism?" As soon as Mass was over, we approached Monsignor. Could he stay for the Baptism? But no, he had to be back in Albury, and he could not, he said, be in two places at once. With this we had to agree, though, between ourselves, I think Monsignor under-estimates his abilities. It was a very worried group which tried to work out a solution. Nothing could be done till the late Masses were over, so we had to go home, and go ahead with preparations wondering all the time if it would be for nothing. The phones ran hot then. Our hopes were low when a suggestion from Father Lane in Corowa, that we should try Monsignor Lawless in Rutherglen, bore fruit. No one could have been more helpful. So the good news was sent round, with the added injunction to get dinner over quickly. All the time, the principals were blissfully unaware of the threat. Now they had to be told of the changed plans. But they had met with too many reverses in their lives to be easily upset. If we had to go to Rutherglen—30 miles instead of one—well then, we go to Rutherglen.

So off we went, 17 of us, so that the baby would not be lonely. Monsignor's gracious reception and kindly admiration of the baby made all very happy. He further showed his understanding of the situation by saying, "Well, now, we'll make a nice little ceremony for them." Which he did, and Edward cried most heartily. Possibly my holding of him left something to be desired, but the elaborate dressing made it impossible to get the "feel" of the baby.

Party Preparations

After the ceremony, snaps had to be taken, and we hurried off home with the "little Catholic" as his mother called him. Our party was now going to be hours late, but that could not be helped.

The party was to be held at the Hall which had a very nice kitchen, supper room and lounge. The Homoteks were living in what the authorities call "a canvas house", but which we and they referred to more accurately as "the tent". It seemed impossible that so large a party could be held there,

but for a long time we were afraid of offending our hosts by saying so. Then the idea of the Hall was put forward and received with the greatest pleasure. Most of the cooking, however, was, it seemed, to be done in the tent. At the appointed time—all being in readiness at the Hall we went down to pick up the family, etc. (At this stage, I wish some one would tell me how to write an article, and listen to a discussion on wheat industry problems at the same time). The tent was full of the most appetising smells, but much remained to be done. The only light over the stove was one storm-lantern. Yes, dear reader, it is a fact, and yet Mrs. Homotek went about her task as expertly as any woman in a modern kitchen. The car was now making many trips over the rough, unmade track alongside the railway line, taking various goods to the Hall. Only once did the atmosphere become a little strained, and this was when Mrs. Homotek found that her husband had apparently taken the tin-opener up to the Hall, and she could not open the Asparagus.

A Great Day

Realising that the situation was desperate, I decided to go and meet the men, and send them back for the opener before her wrath could fall on them. This involved run-

ning a considerable distance along the railway line. I do not advise doing this at night, especially in high heels, and more especially if accompanied by a wild young boy determined to make the best, or from my point of view, the worst, of the adventure. You know the trip-wire the Commissioners insist on putting along side their lines? Well, maybe the less said the better. Anyhow, I met the car near the town and told them with more force than elegance to get the opener. They had gone for cream actually, as some was wanted for the soup. So the asparagus was duly opened, and a few seconds later, Stefan, with a shout, picks up the opener which all the time had been within a few feet of the stove. I held my breath, but all his wife said was a most expressive "Och, the men!" (This is now one of my stock phrases). Another few seconds and the little boy again "finds" it triumphantly. His father, patting him on the head, said, "Oh, you are a good boy", and the tent shook with our delighted laughter. Again a few seconds and Mrs. Homotek says inquiringly, "The cream?" Yes, you've guessed aright. They had forgotten the cream.

At last all was ready and did we get a welcome from the hungry people anxiously waiting. It took us a very short time to serve up and fall to. Never was a meal more enjoyed. Afterwards, we sat round the fire and sang and played games, language difficulties notwithstanding. And we found that New Australians like to tell funny stories about New Australians. Later we had supper, and with much packing and many more trips on the new well-worn track, the night was over. All agreed that we'd had a day we would never forget. But at the back of my mind there is a horrible doubt. Did we say Grace?

N.C.R.M. Homestead Settlement, Wagga, N.S.W.

His Lordship Bishop Henschke has announced the details of the N.C.R.M. Building blocks available for purchase at Wagga.

About 80 blocks of five and ten acres have been surveyed on 500 acres situated about three miles from Wagga on the highway.

Water and electricity are laid on to the area and provision has been made for roads.

Future plans include the building of a Catholic Primary School and Church on the settlement.

Buses will take high-school children in to the Christian Brothers and the Convent. There is also a reliable bus service to the town which caters for shoppers.

The land on which the settlement is situated is highly fertile. The size of the blocks allow homesteaders to keep a cow, a few ducks and fowls

or grow vegetables if they so desire. This will help lower the cost of living for families settling on the estate, and supplement the income of the wage-earner.

The price for each five acre block will be less than £400.

His Lordship has already received many applications. Readers who are interested in purchasing one of the building blocks should write to:

His Lordship,
Bishop Henschke,
The Bishop's House,
Wagga, New South Wales.

or N.C.R.M. Headquarters,
and enclose a deposit of £100.

Final terms for full payment will be arranged at a later date.

AUSTRALIA—A Lazy Man's Country?

Australia is the laziest country in the modern world according to American Professor Nathaniel Pepper.

Returning to America recently after spending nearly a year as a teacher of Far Eastern subjects at Brisbane University, Professor Pepper published an article claiming that nowhere in the world do men work less than in Australian cities and towns.

Country people will be reassured to learn that he did not find workers on sheep and cattle stations so expert at evading effort.

Despite this discovery, Professor Pepper was enthusiastic about Australia.

"The place is so beautiful, especially the back country.

"You hear about the 'dead heart' of Australia, but nobody ever told me how lovely it all is.

"It's dead, all right. But it's beautiful, inexpressibly beautiful.

"And the country people are magnificent, wonderful people."

WHEAT-COST COMPARISONS

South Australia's Director of Agriculture, Dr. A. R. Callaghan, believes Australia is well situated to meet price falls in the world's markets.

Recently he gave figures for present prices received by producers throughout the world.

Country	Price Australian Currency
U.S.A.	19/7 (on farm)
Argentina	24/4 (bagged at ports)
United Kingdom	20/8
Italy	28/6 (soft). 31/6 (hard).
France	24/7½
Turkey	18/5 to 26/1 (according to quality). (Bulk of crop 23/7 to 24/1).
Australia	12/7 (f.o.r. ports), or 10/1 (on farm).

Price support programmes had produced these high artificial prices overseas, he said.

Australia, with a cost of production considerably lower than her competitors, had a margin of safety in the world markets in competition with countries which are bolstered by price supports.

"This does not mean that we should be complacent about cost of production, and smugly sit by with satisfaction at the present margin of safety that appears to exist."

Anything done to increase efficiency of production and lower the cost would be in the interests of themselves and the industry, Dr. Callaghan said.

Visited All Main Cities

During his year in Australia, Professor Pepper visited every State and every city and town of consequence.

"So you can certainly take it that what I think about Australia goes for all of Australia and not just Brisbane", he said.

"Social security in Australia", Professor Pepper said, "is based upon a Federal Court decision of 40 years ago, the principle being that no human being shall be allowed to fall below a certain material level.

"A human being is deemed to be a man with a wife and three children.

"In the 40 years that have passed since Australia pioneered the social security concept, the Australians have lost neither their liberties nor their sense of liberty.

"On the contrary, there are no more fiercely individualistic or independent people in the world."

"Undisciplined and Tough"

Professor Pepper found "an infinity of regulations" or external things, but came away with the definite feeling that as men the Australians are not regulated.

"Clearly it does not follow", he said, "that a people protected by the State have their moral fibre softened and easily yield obedience.

"It is not only in war that the Australians are tough and undisciplinable."

The Australian basic wage is still too low to afford a proper standard of living.

Instancing the Australian's reluctance to put his shoulder to the wheel, Professor Pepper said:

"It is interesting to watch the construction of a simple building.

"The building does get higher, if you go away for a few months, but you can see little progress in a week.

"Bricklayers, carpenters and painters go about their endeavors with a kind of stately measured tread.

"They stop to smoke, to drink tea, to discuss the topics of the day or to contemplate the universe.

"There is the universally-felt satisfaction of giving the boss as little as possible, the boss being the enemy.

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Adelaide's "Middle Age" Spread to Stop?

An expert town planning committee, which would determine what land should be subdivided and would see to the logical development of Adelaide, would be set up, the South Australian Premier announced recently.

Legislation would be introduced into Parliament to set up the committee.

It was necessary because:

- under present methods of subdivision the provision of roads, sewers, water and electricity to new houses was costing too much.
- there had been agitation for green belts and the preservation of land for "breathing space".

The Government wanted compact sub-divisions. When the committee recommended the retention of certain land for recreation the Government's policy would be to buy it at a fair price.

It is to be hoped that the committee will be guided by sound principles of decentralisation, ensuring that the city does not get any larger.

This is all the more important when considered in relation to the satellite town of Salisbury.

Salisbury, centre of the Long Range Weapons Establishment, is 12 miles north of Adelaide. The Housing Trust has recently begun surveying areas for several hundred more houses as an "outer" Salisbury.

Adelaide is surrounded on the west by sea and on the east and south by the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Expansion is possible only northwards. At the present rate of building, it will be a matter of a mere few years when Salisbury will be a suburb of Adelaide.

That is, unless the new planning committee can stop the spread.

It now remains to be seen whether Premier Playford, through his committee, will do something practical towards decentralisation, towards stopping Adelaide develop a "middle age" spread.

W.A.'s LAND SETTLEMENT

Nearly 900 ex-servicemen have been allotted farms since the war service land settlement scheme began in Western Australia in 1946. It is anticipated that when it ends in 1958, the number of farms allotted will exceed 1,250.

The Government is now turning its attention to land settlement schemes for civilians who through their youth or other reasons that have prevented service in the forces, were equally entitled to financial assistance. A committee of representatives of the Rural and Industries Bank and the Department of Lands and Agriculture is to be appointed to investigate what finance would be required.

If the wheat market had remained buoyant, young men trying to establish farms "off their own bat", could have expected fairly quick returns with a much smaller outlay. With an uncertain future for wheat, the need for financial assistance is urgent, as a low first advance on a crop, coupled with long periods between subsequent advances, could force many of them to abandon their farms.

To avoid this and to develop a well-based, diversified farming system, it would be necessary to provide money for boundary and sub-division fencing and dams or bores to enable settlers to turn to meat and wool production. On present indications, it appears that in 1955, the acreage sown for wheat in the West will be reduced considerably, in accordance with the advice given from the Farmers' Union of W.A.

THE NATION WILL BENEFIT FROM VICTORIA'S . . .

BIG EILDON PROJECT

The world's population is increasing at a considerably greater rate than its food production.

One of Australia's major international obligations is the further development of its natural resources, with particular emphasis on food production.

The Big Eildon Project will produce greater quantities of primary production in a shorter space of time than any other major developmental work being carried out in Australia at present.

The Goulburn Irrigation System, which receives its water supplies from the existing Eildon Reservoir, produces at present more than £14,000,000 worth of primary production each year, including:

- 45,000,000 gallons of whole milk,
- 7,500,000 lbs of wool,
- 2,700,000 bushels of fresh fruit,
- 18,000 tons of meat,
- 40,000 tons of vegetables.

Construction of the Big Eildon Reservoir will enable this production to be doubled.

N.S.W. Settlement — Big Potential but Financial Frustration

The tremendous burden of establishing land settlers has risen so much in recent years that it is almost beyond the capacity of State Governments under present financial conditions, the New South Wales Minister for Lands (Mr. F. H. Hawkins) told the A.L.P. Rural Conference recently.

Mr. Hawkins said that by the end of June this year the New South Wales Government had spent approximately £28 million on soldier settlement while the direct Commonwealth contribution will still be less than £1 million.

Throughout Australia there is a land-hunger as urgent and as pressing as at any stage in history and in addition to qualified ex-servicemen there were men too young to go to war and others, engaged in primary production, who were denied the right to enlist.

Mr. Hawkins said Australia had a vast closer settlement potential but too little time left to work and develop it to build up an economy that will carry the 25 million population so urgently needed.

Some authorities had estimated that Australia had, at best, only a few years left to develop Australia or have it over-run by the over-

crowded and under-privileged peoples of the East.

Mr. Hawkins assured delegates that the State Government in New South Wales was alive to the position and was doing its best to overcome the problems.

State Governments, however, had lost real control over the finances and could not carry out from their own resources a task of the magnitude of closer settlement, which was a national problem and one which should be met on a national scale by the provision of finance from the Federal Government.

Dealing with figures, Mr. Hawkins said New South Wales had settled 2246 ex-servicemen on farms.

There had been 19,000 qualification certificates issued, consent to the transfer of land to ex-servicemen had been granted in 6000 cases and 7000 ex-servicemen had been assisted in settlement by State Government agency.

LAW SOMNER'S DEPENDABLE

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New Zealand Govt. Certified
COCKSFOOT
VICTORIAN
New Zealand Govt. Certified.
PASPALUM DILATATUM
LUCERNE, "PILCA BUTTA"
COW GRASS (RED CLOVER)
JAPANESE MILLET
SUDAN GRASS

SUBTERRANEAN CLOVER
Bacchus Marsh, Govt. Certified.
Mt. Barker Strain, Govt. Certified.
Dwalganup Strain, Govt. Certified.
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Rum Jungle and St.

The Supervisor of schools in the Northern Territory and the Manager of the Rum Jungle Mine, were there, too, because this was to be a memorable day for the young township of Batchelor—the opening day of the first Public School.

Such is the speed of development at Batchelor, that the town not then twelve months old, could already boast of a neatly appointed commodious school with a roll call of some fifty pupils.

Bishop's Interest

Bishop O'Loughlin showed me the site recently obtained from the authorities to build a Church. It is a little distance south of the Public School building, and quite close to where the future hospital will be. The Bishop has taken a close personal interest in Rum Jungle and its people right from the beginning. Curiously enough, White's epoch-making discovery of the radio-active ore in 1949 coincided very closely with Bishop O'Loughlin taking over this vast diocese. Since 1952, His Lordship has spent the third week-end of every month at the mine site, and later at Batchelor, when the township began. His congregation for Sunday Mass has risen steadily month by month, as the work expanded at the mine.

St. Barbara's of Batchelor

Last September, he presided at the first general meeting of parishioners called to elect a parish committee. Mine Engineer, Bart Ryan, was elected President, and Prospector Jack White, Vice-President. The first task was to set about planning a suitable church on the site made available. It was unanimously agreed to place the church under the patronage of St. Barbara, the patroness of miners; and that some type of steel framed-building would be best suited to requirements. For nobody knows just how vast Rum Jungle uranium resources are. Even those best qualified to a guess are silent because all this is a top secret. But it seems likely Rum Jungle will be worked out within a life-time or two, when perhaps the church could be moved elsewhere.

Rapid Progress

After viewing the church site, we visited various parishioners in their new homes. Everywhere we looked, something was going on. The progress made since my last visit was really amazing. At the Government's request, Consolidated Zinc Pty. Ltd. formed the Subsidiary, Territory Enterprises Pty. Ltd. (or T.E.P. as it is known all over the Territory), to

develop the Rum Jungle field, taking it over from the Bureau of Mineral Resources.

We were viewing now the result of the T.E.P. Administration and its large capital outlay. Brightly painted, prefabricated, 2 or 3-roomed homes were scattered along the five formed streets, which all bear aboriginal names. About forty homes are already occupied; another forty or so are under way. A block for single-men's quarters to house about one hundred men is practically finished. Another similar block is under construction, as well as a smaller block for single women.

Improvised Homes

Outside the town site proper, mainly following the line of the curved bitumen inserts at the end of the war-time airstrip close by, we found a variety of dwellings. Here, we sought out a few people, who had recently transferred from Darwin. We saw shanties formed from the remains of old Air Force installations, or hastily constructed from bush timbers, also caravans, tents and such like, their occupants waiting for houses to be completed in orthodox fashion in the town proper.

We saw the Batchelor Air Strip itself, which, though not used at all since the war, is in an excellent state of repair. It was on this strip that I touched down, when I first arrived in the North in 1942. At that time, transport planes were not permitted further north than this point, fighter and bomber planes only making landings on the 'dromes at Darwin.

Crater Lake

As we drove back to join the Stuart Highway, we called at the Crater Lake to bring back to Darwin with us a friend, a contractor, engaged on the Batchelor Water Supply Project. Crater Lake, thought by some to be meteorite crater, but explained by others on geological lines, was once a favourite spot for swimming parties and picnics, but now is being fenced in as a prohibited area, and a pipe line is being constructed to pump water for the town supply.

The third Sunday of the month, following the opening of the schools, found Bishop O'Loughlin some thousand miles away in the Alice Springs district. So I went to Batchelor for the Sunday Mass. Arriving early on Saturday morning, I went first to the mine site at Rum Jungle along the new 5-mile road from Batchelor.

Rum Jungle Mine

A pair of heavy iron gates with a huge "stop" sign barred the way. I produced my pass issued by the Ad-

By Father Frank F

In the glare of the mid-n and women in gaily coloured that led to the raised veranda Already assembled on the ve expectancy, forty or fifty ne against a backdrop of tall g welcome that greeted Bishop the car that brought us ove Darwin.

ministrator of the Northern Territory and the gatekeeper gave me in return a large clip-on button for my coat with the word "Pass" on it. I went straight to the workings known as "White's" where the main shaft is now at a depth of about 500 ft., later to be deepened to 550 ft. Surmounting the shaft is a steel headframe with winches and nearby is a huge steel ore hopper. This main shaft is sunk alongside the uranium lode, not directly over it, and the ore is reached by cross-cutting and tunnelling into the lode. Around the shaft are huge new steel buildings to house the necessary machinery and work shops.

Behind these buildings is being erected the processing plant, where the ore will be refined down to uranium oxide. The final smelting to produce pure uranium will be done elsewhere. Men were engaged in welding huge steel tanks, which will form part of the treatment plant. Further back was a pile of uranium ore awaiting processing. I estimated there might be about 10,000 tons in this pile of grey-blue powdery-looking rock.

Dyson's and Mt. Fitch

T.E.P. is responsible for developing any uranium workings in the Hundred of Goyder, which comprises a field of some 168 square miles. Two other uranium finds are being worked in this area, besides Whites.

Dyson's, about a mile from White's, was found in 1950 by Dyson, a geologist with the Bureau of Mineral Resources. Open-cut methods are being used at Dyson's as the most economical. Bull-dozers are gouging out a huge jagged hole, tearing away hundreds of tons of overburden earth and exposing the reefs.

At a third find at Mt. Fitch, seven miles north-west of White's is a criss-

Barbara's of Batchelor

, M.S.C., Adm., Darwin

heat, small groups of men in whites were mounting the flight of steps, new multi-louved tropical building. There sat, with an air of restrained, dressed children. This scene, staged in scattered tropical palms, was the phlin and me, as we stepped out of 2 miles of bitumen highway from

cross of costeans—huge trenches cut in the earth for outlining and plotting the line of the reefs.

Aerial Surveys

During the past two dry seasons, geologists of the Bureau of Mineral Resources have conducted aerial surveys, with scintillometers. In a Dakota plane equipped with these instruments, they have criss-crossed vast areas of the Northern Territory. When these airborne scintillometers fly over some radioactive ore, they scintillate and that position is fixed instantly by highly specialised radar navigational equipment. Each anomaly (as this reaction from the normal on the scintillometer is called) is charted by a dot on the map at the appropriate place.

Lighter planes at tree-top height investigate these areas more closely and ground parties of geologists and geophysicists traverse the dotted areas, taking geiger counters and scintillometers. In this way, accurate investigations of radioactive areas are made.

A second Dakota plane has been fitted up to allow more intensive aerial surveys this year.

Jack White

Back at White's, I had a yarn with Jack White himself who is the cause of all the tearing up of the country. He has been prospecting for tin and gold for over 20 years.

In 1949, he was living in a galvanised iron shack in the bush a few miles from Rum Jungle. Between bursts of prospecting, he tried his hand at tropical agriculture on a few acres around his hut. To supplement his diet, he often walked 2 to 3 miles from his home through the bush across the East Finness Creek, seeking game.

On these lonely walks, he always kept a look out for minerals. One afternoon in 1949, in a patch of scrub, he happened upon an exposed outcrop which he recognised as containing copper ore. He knew there was a copper mine in this vicinity a quarter of a century earlier, so he was not unduly surprised by this discovery.

Discovery

He did notice, however, some unusual feature about the colouring in this rock; the green colouring characteristic of copper was unusually dark, also mingled with the green were canary yellow crystallised flakes. He chipped samples from the reef, and observed traces of powdery sulphur yellow ore running through the specimens.

White consulted a handbook published by the Bureau of Mineral Resources under the authority of the Minister for National Development. He found his specimens were similar to the coloured plates in the back of the pamphlet, showing what torbernite, carnotite, autunite and other secondary uranium-bearing ores looked like.

He was off to Darwin with his specimens as soon as he could. Mines Branch officials confirmed his opinion. He sent further samples to the Mines Department in Alice Springs and to the Bureau of Mineral Resources in Melbourne. They were found to be radio-active. Without delay, geologists and geophysicists of the Bureau visited the spot, and reported a definite outcrop of uranium-bearing deposit. Thus was the occurrence of uranium first heard of in the Northern Territory in October, 1949.

Reward

Diamond drilling, to trace the course of the ore body and its extent, was started. Ore was shipped to the United States for detailed examination and results were so encouraging as to cause the Federal Government to proceed with plans for the exploitation of the deposit. In due course, Jack White received his £25,000 tax-free reward for his find, and has now a transport contract at the mine in connection with the installations, and keeps a lively interest in all that is going on, as well as being the active Vice-President of St. Barbara's parish committee.

I came back to Batchelor by the old road, that follows the line of the Darwin-Larrimah Railway for a few miles. Just across the line lies the original patch of jungle that give the locality its colourful name. It is now included in octogenarian Tom Flynn's cattle holding.

The Jungle

The legend of Rum Jungle dates from 1886. Two men in a bullock cart, who were taking some barrels of rum to men working in a nearby copper mine, felt very thirsty as they drove through this small semi-tropical jungle. They rolled out a barrel and opened it, drank their fill and went to sleep. When they awoke, they found the precious fluid had spilt on the ground and the barrel was empty. This incident gave the name "Rum Jungle" to the spot.

The last time I passed here was with the Manager of the Northern Territory Railways, in his new sedan car. The pneumatic-tyred wheels had been removed and replaced by appropriate wheels for rail usage. The steering wheel, of course, was superfluous, and had been removed. But all else—gears, clutch, brakes and the usual gadgets—was the same as used for road traffic. Great fun it was to sit behind the windscreen and see the rail track stretching for miles ahead, picking its way in turn through jungles, forests, scrub and swamps. I recalled that this was the same rail-track along which Mr. Aeneas Gunn had meandered, and penetrated the grim interior in 1902, all beautifully described in her book, "We of the Never-Never".

Tom Flynn

On this visit by rail, Tom Flynn had told me that the cataracts in his eyes were so dense, that he could no longer see his cattle. It was in connection with this that I was calling on him now.

I stopped my car, crossed the line and was struggling through the barbed wire fence, when Mrs. Flynn called out to me threateningly. She surmised I was yet another thief, coming to raid her heavily laden mango trees. When she had identified me beyond doubt, she took me up to her husband. Tom Flynn was a gangster at the fettlers camp on the line, before he retired to his Rum Jungle property many years ago. As he had never left the Territory in thirty years or more, he was rather apprehensive when I told him that arrangements were complete for his admission to hospital in Sydney the following week. When I went on to tell him that he would step into a Constellation plane at 10.30 Wednesday night and have breakfast in Lewisham Hospital on Thursday morning, he was stunned, and at first inclined not to believe it possible. Still, he did want to see his cattle again, so "was prepared to give anything a go!"

(Continued on Page 16)

SUMMARY OF AUSTRALIA'S OIL PROSPECTS

Oil has become a major topic of discussion in Australia, the ordinary citizen has been keenly interested in newspaper comments about future prospects. A general summary should therefore be welcome.

West Australian prospects have always been good, as the whole of the North-West Basin (scene of Exmouth Gulf strike) would have been developed long ago had it been in U.S.A. Oil there is now within reach. The more northern Kimberley Basin and the Coastal Plains Basin (around Perth) are also considered to be full of promise.

South Australia is not as well placed. The Eucla Basin is getting a good workover while in the southern part of the Murray Basin, drilling first began in 1892 but results weren't encouraging, partly because the bore sites were not well chosen.

In Victoria, 40 bores have been sunk in the Gippsland Basin, and thousands of barrels of oil produced but the "big flow" has not been struck. Oil is present but how much? and just where?

In Queensland, the Great Artesian Basin has been pierced by 5,000 or so water-bores, reaching from 1,000 to 5,000 feet deep. Some have revealed gas and bituminous matter (near Longreach, for instance) but lack of oil indicates how hard it is to pick oil traps by random drilling in a large sedimentary basin. Drilling has gone on for 50 years intermittently at Roma, with some 40 deep wells and numerous scout bores. Limited amounts of oil and gas have offered tantalising encouragement, but again—no big strike.

In New South Wales, the Sydney Coal Basin has been shown to contain suitable structures for trapping oil and gas. Six bores have been drilled and the lack of interest in the past is being overcome.

In territory under Australian Government control. Papua-New Guinea areas have always been regarded as full of promise. £12,000,000 has been expended, 20 wells drilled, one of which is the deepest in the Southern Hemisphere, 13,700 feet deep and still going down. Prospects are excellent and something good from New Guinea will come.

It is believed that wherever seas covered the Australian continent long ago, the sediments of mud, sand and silt carried down with them large amounts of microscopic living things vegetable and animal, gradually converted into billions of infinitesimal droplets of oil.

As the sediments settled down under their own weight to form "sedimentary rocks", the droplets were squeezed into little pools which moved through porous layers to form bigger pools which ultimately reached a "trap" or "reservoir" where they remained or still remain. Money and patience almost without limit are the main requirements to locate these "traps".



RURAL LAND USE

The number and area of rural holdings in Australia in 1952-53, compared with 1951-52 were:

NUMBER AND AREA OF RURAL HOLDINGS
(⁰⁰⁰ acres)

Particulars	Year	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'd.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Aus. (a)
Number	1951-52	73,122	69,298	41,641	28,698	19,515	11,414	243,914
	1952-53	72,940	69,353	42,382	28,832	19,655	11,812	245,187
Area (⁰⁰⁰ acres)	1951-52	168,250	37,936	358,320	151,785	212,988	6,438	936,112
	1952-53	167,907	37,868	358,331	152,689	215,939	6,559	939,687

(a) Includes Australian Capital Territory.

Of the above total of 939,687,000 acres of land utilised in 1952-53, the area used for crops was 19,944,000 acres, 7,492,000 acres were lying fallow, 20,664,000 acres were under sown grasses and clovers, and 891,587,000 acres were used for grazing, lying idle, etc.

Area Under Crops: The total area of all crops in 1952-53 (including areas double cropped) was 20,371,000 acres, compared with 19,797,000 acres in 1951-52, an increase of 2.9 per cent. However, this was 3,127,000 acres, or 13.3 per cent., less than in 1938-39.

AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

The estimated population of Australia increased during 1953 by 164,944, or 1.87 per cent., from a total of 8,752,819 to 8,917,763. This compares with the record increase of 264,909 in 1950 and with 214,085 in 1952.

The 1953 increase consisted of a record natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 122,047, compared with the previous record of 120,053 in 1952; and a net migration gain (excess of arrivals over departures) of 42,897, compared with the post-war record of 152,505 in 1950, and 94,032 in 1952.

Arrivals from overseas in 1953, with 1952 figures in parentheses, totalled 163,125 (215,839), made up of 74,915 (127,824) permanent arrivals (intending residence for at least one year), and 88,210 (88,015) residents returning from overseas trips of less than one year and visitors.

Departures totalled 120,228 (121,807), of which 32,032 (30,370) were permanent and 88,196 (91,437) were returning residents and visitors.

Capital Cities: Estimated populations at December 31, 1953; Sydney, 1,621,040 (at December 31, 1952); Melbourne, 1,426,500; Brisbane, 484,000; Adelaide, 469,000; Perth, 358,000; Hobart, 93,500 (at June 30, 1953); Darwin, 8,600; Canberra, 29,200.

* * *

MIGRATION

Overseas Movements: Net total migration from 1947 to 1953 inclusive totalled 616,594.

Migrants in 1953 (figures for 1952 are in parentheses): Of the 74,915 (127,824) permanent new arrivals in 1953, males numbered 37,792 (78,150) and females 37,123 (49,674). Persons of British nationality numbered 34,862 (64,107), or 46.54 (50.15) per cent. Of the others, largest groups were: 13,804 (28,000) of Italian nationality; 9,374 (15,418) Dutch; 7,924 (6,985) German; 2,952 (2,344) Greek; 1,036 (817) U.S. American.

Principal occupations of permanent newcomers in 1953 were: Males: craftsmen, 7,294 (15,122); rural workers, 5,422 (10,118); labourers, 2,993 (14,304); commercial and clerical, 2,524 (4,420); operatives, 2,214 (7,842); children and students, 12,418 (16,623). Females: commercial and clerical, 2,560 (3,716); professional, 2,023 (2,345); domestic 1,423 (1,833); operatives, 829 (1,539); children and students, 10,590 (14,425); others (mainly housewives), 19,698 (25,816).

AN ENGINEER'S VISION OF AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

by B. A. McDonall.

The author of this article who is a Civil Engineer, stresses the necessity in any scheme of closer settlement, for providing conditions on the land different from the pioneer conditions in Australia in the past, else the flight to the cities will continue. He recommends that the provision of utilities, roads, etc. should move with closer settlement, together with the development of a strong local social and co-operative life. The necessity of scientific farming is stressed and the article warns against the tendency towards State capitalism. A suggestion is made for voluntary sub-division at the same time as the formation of local credit societies for financing new settlers on these sub-divisions.

The "Great Open Spaces" have been publicised in the past as a glamorous attraction of the new countries of the world where men are men and so forth. Australia like the Americas will be a land of open spaces for many centuries to come, so that with closer settlement, the glamour of the "bush" will still persist; but we are so used to thinking of Australia as the land of the great outdoors, which has been immortalised by our great poets, that it may not strike the average man that such a vast expanse of open spaces and of loneliness, in many respects does not reflect all credit on our National Planning intelligence.

We have hitherto developed Australia piecemeal, picking the eyes of it as it were, in so far as arable land is concerned, and looking askance at hillsides or areas of poor soil as incapable of being cultivated. Our development for mass production in primary industries is explained by our unique history. We have developed vast expanses of land under sheep and wheat, confident of foreign markets waiting for our wool, meat and grain, and those who have been given hills of low natural productivity, have opened them to sheep and have awaited what fate brought, trusting against bush fires and drought.

Hillside Cultivation

A passing acquaintance however with similar conditions in older more crowded countries, shows that all land (other than rocks) can be cultivated if treated in the correct way. The author has seen similar hillside land in Italy, Germany, France and Portugal, under intense cultivation where the pressure of need has forced farmers to build up the fertility of the soil to the stage where, on small holdings of a few acres only, surprising numbers of stock have been run,

and many crops of grasses for fodder have been harvested every year. In such areas, any land naturally suited for the growing of vegetables has been jealously guarded and tended for generations as a prize from which is made a comfortable living.

In Australia not only do we as a rule consider poor country not worthy of improvement, but also fertile downs and plains which could be very intensively cultivated under closer settlement are either wasted or given over to sheep. In Europe there are tens of thousands of hillside farmers who, if Providence were to transport a few acres of our sheep country to them, would in a short while develop them to a living capacity of twenty families to the square mile.

Transfer People

We have no need here to closely settle hillsides as they do on the Rhine, and we would not, if we could, transport our acres to Europe, but we could do the next best thing for humanity, that is, transfer many of such people to our acres and encourage those of our own townsmen who can do so, to settle on the land as professional farmers. This Australia is too rich to be wasted or to be the plaything of ruinous theories of Economics.

Someone will develop it, and during this generation we will be faced with the choice on the one hand of rapid advance, or on the other—well, our fore-fathers found Australia going begging and claimed this prize, no one else seemed to want it. Will History be repeated as an alternative to OUR developing Australia! First come, first served was the principle on which we were allowed to hold Australia. We were "first come", but have we been served too liberally?

Isolation and Loneliness

With the wide advertisement of city comforts in contrast to country conditions, it is almost impossible to get young men to "Go West" with no inducement other than hardship. We have had slogans such as "Grow More Wheat", and at present most men on the land are earning quite a comfortable living, yet there is a continued movement to the cities. Many men on the land who should be consolidating their holdings like the yeomen of England and developing an agricultural family with an outlook of scientific farming, face in Australia the prospect of many years of isolation from civilisation with the sole thought of making money as land miners, and then moving to some city where they can spend the remainder of their days in comfort.

Can they be blamed for this? This wrong approach to farming is understandable in the case of the farmer, isolated in his private dust-bowl facing a succession of droughts perhaps with his savings dwindling and his stock dying, or in the case where the farmer is isolated in wet weather, miles from the nearest town, without power, with intervening long paddocks of mud known as a by-road. Perhaps scientific farming may solve some of his problems, but it will not solve one of the gravest problems we face, that the farmer's son will not endure what his father did. Instead, the son makes for the city where he joins the ranks of the voiceless.

We have again the familiar cases of the few who desire to try their "fortune" on the land, and who cannot obtain the land on which to speculate. Still again, immigrants arrive in Australia who for various reasons will not stay on the land; some say that the reason is that the work is too hard, or that it is different from what they have been used to, or else that the immigrants cannot obtain their own tenures. These reasons do not appear to be very convincing.

Those with the pioneering spirit, who are prepared to brave the "bush" for years on end, are comparatively few, but they were always small in number compared with the numbers who like town life. The tendency to fly from the country is becoming more pronounced, because few people in these times will voluntarily choose loneliness or hardship, in the proverbial Australian pioneer conditions. We have in fact three types, he who endures, he who cleans up and gets out and the other who amasses a large and wealthy holding and leaving a manager in charge, holds forth in the comfort of a town house or a city hotel on the delights of the life on the land.

Those who endure are the real backbone of the country, but so are the others in so far as they may have the right spirit. People like com-

(Continued Over Leaf)

fort, but most of all, and this is stressed in this article, people like the cultural, social and business associations with others which are available to them in more crowded areas, and which in the case of migrants, have been available to them in Europe, where a few miles' ride from country areas will bring them, not to an isolated country store but to the heart of civilisation.

Closer Settlement

In many areas of Australia due to the comparatively low rainfall with high rate of evaporation, there will be always, even with closer settlement, marginal areas which must be given over to stock. However in the development of Australia we must plan for closer settlement wherever possible, where farmers' families assured of social life, will stay on the land, will accept farming as a profession, as a scientific study, and certainly not, as many approach farming today as a speculation.

Conditions have obtained recently however which have tended to give quite a wrong approach to the life on the land. In Eastern Australia, we have seen now for some years, a strong growth of natural grasses, broad acres under sheep in excellent condition and wheat growing in marginal belts year after year where previously crops failed. The appearance of the country everywhere is pleasing, and this should be the aspect always with a well-developed country. Vast areas of land close to rivers provide sustenance for sheep and living for the few, and with high wool prices, people talk vaguely of the wealth of Australia. In a succession of good seasons, many city dwellers, noting the new cars everywhere think enviously that after all, there might be something in this farming business, and inquire idly as to the availability of well-developed farms where they can spend their week-ends perhaps. In fact today, farming is very fashionable and pays handsome comforts.

Civil Engineers and Agronomists know that this state of things cannot last, that dust-bowl conditions will return in their proper cycle. They know also that something must be done to minimise the effects of droughts and see a solution in the extension of irrigation wherever possible.



The wealth of a country must in the end be reckoned in man-power, not sheep power and there are millions of men and women who could be supported on lands close to rivers, with intense cultivation and small irrigation works. Away from the rivers where sheep now roam in loneliness there are very extensive areas indeed which could be turned into productive fields by major irrigation works.

Finance

It is easy to talk of closer settlement and major civil engineering works, but, say the conservatives, what of finance! Who is going to pay the hundreds of millions required for the necessary irrigation works to develop the vast territories adjacent to our inland rivers? The cost of the Snowy Mountains scheme alone



will be over four hundred millions, and this cost will give only the initial power stages. This argument against closer settlement, the financial one, is considered to be unanswerable by many. There is no reply at all. The statements are true, in fact to anyone with vision, the figures could be multiplied by ten. The power and Irrigation Development of New South Wales alone will (not would) run into thousands of millions of pounds, but at this stage it is not much help to take flights into the firmament of fancy gathering stars. Clearly however, the finance necessary for extensive development will never come from the present population of Australia. Everyone today is decrying the lack of funds and hoping that some financial magician will pull the solution out of a hat, after which everyone will be happy, prosperity will blossom, and everyone will have more and more time to do less and less.

Manpower

Finance however is not a CAUSE it is a SYMPTOM and scarcity of funds is a result of lack of manpower. As an illustration let us take a simple example in development, where say six families want a road thirty miles long to serve them for communication with a railhead, assuming a very common country condition of the present day of the great open spaces. These six families, like the hundreds

of other similar groups of families throughout Australia are for ever pestering their local Council for a "decent road". The cost of providing even a well constructed gravel road on such a length with average standards would be say, fifty thousand pounds, and because no one has the necessary finance, the work is never started. Let us suppose that the price of wool soared to a fantastic figure, Australia would then have a big influx of nominal funds. If the Federal Government then granted to every New South Wales Council, from the golden bank of financial prosperity, sufficient credit to build all these roads for the families wanting them, then no one would be any better off because, **THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT MEN AVAILABLE TO SWING THE PICKS.** It takes men to build roads, not money only. Similarly with all public works.

It is hard enough to get labour today for maintenance let alone for extensive construction. If funds are available for construction, maintenance suffers, if men are not released from maintenance, construction is impossible. This shortage of manpower is felt everywhere, but particularly by engineers and farmers who are everywhere frustrated by lack of personnel. The development of Australia at the present rate of increase of manpower, would take hundreds of years, in fact, with the parallel growth of secondary industries, the upper limit of development has almost been reached with the present population, because we are approaching the condition where all manpower is required for essential maintenance of existing developments.

Eight million people cannot do impossibilities, particularly where, as in Australia, sixty per cent. of the people live in the Capital Cities, buying and selling something, or writing out orders for those who are buying something, or waiting on those who are buying and selling something, all of whom must be fed and clothed from the wealth of primary production which is a function of manpower.

An Ideal

The closer settlement of the country for the benefit of the people who work the country is an ideal which should appeal to all classes, all

sections. With this ideal one can overcome a condition found frequently today, grudging service with minimum of efficiency. The proposals should be more widely publicised with a view to obtaining the support of the man in the street, who always asks what he gets out of it. In a regional development along the lines of the Rural Movement, he will be an important unit in a great co-operative scheme for making this country what it should be, each area to be a developing region with its small city and its light industries, its theatre, library, and its cultural life and Church centre. In the rural belts there will be class of small farmer and the country will be criss-crossed by power lines and irrigation canals, with good roads everywhere, the whole a co-operative community wherein loneliness, class-consciousness, and exploitation will be things of the past, in fact where the conditions of life will be similar to those towards which the Church was striving in the middle ages when its civilisation was overtaken by the blight of humanism.

An ideal? Yes, and why not! Other countries have been developed on these lines, why not Australia! Impracticable? Not alone practicable, but also necessary for our survival.

Need for Scientific Approach

The development of Australia will depend mostly on farmers and artisans. These will require technical advice which will come from Agronomists and Engineers who will be expected to keep themselves abreast of progressive methods and technical advances both at home and abroad.

Five Factors Which Need to be Stressed in Development

1. In any particular area, settlement and the provision of amenities, roads, power, etc., must move together. Experience has shown that the "bush", the "backblocks" or the "never-never" do not appeal to most people as a family or social setting.

2. Farmers, with closer settlement, should make farming a scientific occupation and train their families and themselves in modern scientific farming techniques. Technical information is available for the asking and it is a surprising thing that there are so many farmers who are content to carry on with a primitive outlook on the possibilities of their land. Without a scientific approach the small farmer in particular will not obtain the full benefit from his land.

3. New settlers will be faced with financial problems. The popular method of finance, requiring security, cannot be applied to extensive closer settlement, but the wide development of credit societies is the method which should be adopted.

4. Engineers and Agricultural Scientists will need to go out of their way individually, without being approached, to help farmers, for frequently the latter do not know when their knowledge is inadequate, or when their methods are wasteful and uneconomical.

5. The distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian goal as represented by Materialist Socialism might here be noted. There is a modern tendency to State Capitalism (which is not confined to Communist countries) which while nominally humanitarian is basically un-Christian. This tendency avoids security of tenure in land as a reaction from the Liberal Capitalism of the last century. Tenure which can be willed to one's children is the only type of holding which will give the farmer (or artisan) a stake in the country.

State Capitalism has for its goal the prosperity of the State at any cost, as represented by State finances. The goal of making Australia as a country "prosperous", should be a secondary one—the prime goal is to give Australians by a stake in the country, sufficient interest and comfort to enable them to live full Christian lives. A prosperous Australia can only be assured by having happy Australians, not vice versa.

For this reason, closer settlement must be with the message of the Gospel, as put forward by the Rural Movement, that is to say, with Christian principles, otherwise those who will be closely settled will end as units in a state economy like the very sheep which now graze on the land they will occupy, units whose purpose (like super-intelligent sheep) will be primarily to form a sound economy for their State Masters.

The Task Ahead

It is our duty as custodians of a vast continent to provide landless people with an opportunity to obtain a livelihood, to develop along Christian lines family farms in regions where there will be loyal local feeling and strong cultural development and Corporate Local Government.

It is not our duty as Australians, as Christians, to listen to catch-cries of Power and Class Politics, to follow blindly the shibboleths of pressure groups or to take part in activities which arise from policies which will give big interests bigger dividends at the expense of the man on the land, which will give industrial ogres greedier controls or to cities, larger populations.

A conscious break-away is required from laissez-faire attitude which is tending to national disaster because such allows the pressure of city industrial and other groups to dominate policy for the benefit of class politics

or of sectional interests. A change of approach is required which will result in a corporate unity else there is no doubt that Australia will not survive.

As a practical suggestion to start, voluntary subdivision by owners of some of the large holdings could be attempted. The first step would be to step up employment for increased production; the second, to give the employees long-term tenancy or shares, with option of purchase; the third step, subdivision. A landowner without heirs whose estate will otherwise find its way to death duties or to charity could be approached to lead the way in an act of charity which the testator could supervise during his life time. As for finance, credit unions of wage earners, share farmers, and of the land owners themselves.

It is clear that the task ahead is almost superhuman, but it is no solution merely to sit and cry of difficulties, for what we are facing must be solved during the next decade. It is useless to wait for Governments to move first—the Legislature, if slow to act, merely reflects our own apathy. Motion must come from private individuals, for of such, after all, is comprised the system in which we move, we are not units in a State Socialism.

Although action for decentralisation and immigration is urgent, land must be made available, and there must also be in the foreseeable future, regional plans, with subdivisions, with communications, and all the countless detail of Engineering and Agricultural action so that development will be along scientific and not haphazard lines.

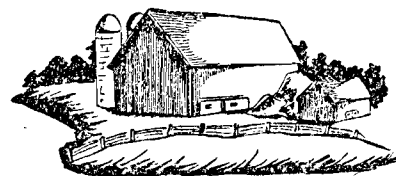
A big task, certainly, and are we capable of it? The author is certain that we are; even if we are not, then we must set out to train ourselves to this end, because there are two spurs to drive us.

Firstly, we have a duty as Catholics and as Australians to develop this incomparable continent.

Secondly, if we do not, someone else will.

We have land, the technical ability, and surely we have the will. We have farmers, but not enough—we need more manpower and with God's help and the guidance of the Church in matters of moral principle, we cannot fail to reach our goal of a Corporate Australia, run on Christian business lines.

—B. A. McDONALL.



S.F.S. enthuses about a well-known Australian novel

“A HOUSE IS BUILT”

Whenever I pass on the Hume Highway the sign that says “COBBITY 5” I feel a slight urge to turn off and inspect the scene of Maud Hyde’s runaway marriage with Humphrey Gillam, and although there is never actually time for such minor frivolities I go on my way just that little bit more firmly settled in native soil because people in books have found it worthwhile to conduct their adventures in possible places, and paddocks and post and rail fences have achieved immortality along with the copses and spinneys and meadows wherein most of one’s childhood heroes conducted their maiden-rescuing activities.

Of course age teaches one that it doesn’t matter, so many other things are so much more important, but in the far back days when I was learning square root and the principal products of Buenos Aires it was a matter of distinct moment that the haunts of the mighty were so geographically remote. One felt that life was going to be very drab for those born to the Antipodes.

At the moment there seems to be no new novels worth reading so I am digging back a bit to recommend one that is by no means new. In case you haven’t read “A House is Built” by M. Barnard Eldershaw I shall devote my current 600 words to advising you to do so forthwith. It is the sort of book that most libraries would stock and there are plenty of copies in the bookshops. It was first published in London in 1929 and was reprinted nine times by Harrap before its first Australian printing by the Australasian Publishing Company in 1945, since when it has been reprinted twice more, the last time in 1950. It tells the story of the Hyde family and follows their fortunes for fifty years in the generation one hundred years before our own. James Hyde, Quartermaster in the British Navy, takes one look at Sydney Harbour and decides that “any city built in such a spot must become a great city”—just the place for an enterprising man to open a business. In 1839 he sets up his store down on the wharves at Windmill Street, near the famous “Rocks” district, and brings out his family of three children, William, Fanny and Maud. The fortunes of old Sydney then rise and fall around the steadily advancing prosperity of the migrant family and we follow them out of the store, where they lived over the shop, through a respectable gentleman’s residence in City Road near the present Broadway to “Firenze” the mansion in Hunter’s Hill, as the House of Hyde is built by the lion headed James. I am told that “Firenze” still stands in Hunter’s Hill but I am one of those people who always should have come a fortnight ago (the trees were in full blossom) or should have come a half an hour earlier (Aunt Angela has just left), and so the driver of every vehicle in which I have ever sat in those parts repeats with monotonous

persistence “If we’d taken that other turn at the bridge I could have shown you “Firenze”—that’s supposed to be the house in that book, you know.” So I can merely pass on the information as hearsay.

Success

And so the Hydes have success, but not much else, as their supply of furniture grows in weight and magnificence (I like particularly this sort of passage “Anyone who had the patience to disentangle the time from the gilt ornamentation of the parlour clock could see it was a quarter-past ten”) Maud, the youngest, asks little of life but bonnets and bracelets and honest affection all of which her pleasant Humphrey is able to give her when he whisks her out of the complicated pattern of human misunderstandings to live happy ever after. William, proud and unresponsive, does not understand his gentle wife Adela (who is somewhat the sort of person Amelia Semple could have been had Thackeray been merciful) and she in her turn is given no



great chance to understand the pride of the House, her son James, whose downfall at the hands of another Becky Sharp wipes out the half century’s building and leaves the House of Hyde a vast emptiness of ugly splendour inhabited by the unwilling heir Lionel, second son of William and Adela, who prefers music to business anyhow.

Although the warm and gracious Adela is the binding force of the book she is overshadowed by the fighting Fanny who should have been the man of the house and never quite lives down the disappointment. Adela does find fulfilment in her devotion to Lionel but Fanny, endowed with all the qualities for which the world had no use in an unmarried woman, has a long path of frustration along which she walks with honour but very little consolation.

First Class

I don’t seem to be giving you much inducement to read this chronicle of disappointments, but it is not a depressing book and its quality as a piece of first class imaginative writing is its recommendation. Characterisations and descriptions are skilfully done, the history of the rising nation is absorbed into the pattern of these few lives in a masterly fashion and the authors (for Barnard and Eldershaw are two people, both women) have a keen perception of how slight are the single constituents which add up to tragedy. Adela and Fanny are real people and their problems are the sort we can understand and share. And there is a lightness of touch and breadth of approach which makes this a more than notable book.

P.S.—Since it has pleased the Editor in last month’s issue to reveal the name behind the initials I might add a slight note to the effect that next to anonymity my favourite virtue is accuracy. The name is Serena, not Selina.

* * *

Editor’s P.S.

I stand corrected. A thousand apologies. I can never remember names properly. They tell me it is the sign of an addled brain.

NOTICE

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT
have been appointed as agents for the
LONDON & LANCASHIRE INSURANCE CO.
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Soviet turns on its pet Biologist

Trofim D. Lysenko, once the virtual dictator of genetics in the Soviet Union, is under renewed attack in the Soviet press.

For the past six years Lysenko has contended that environment can influence not only plant species but practically all forms of life. Given proper environment, he says, wheat will turn into barley or pine trees into spruce trees.

A recent issue of the **Moscow Journal of General Biology** characterizes his theories as "unsubstantiated and essentially mistaken." The **Journal's** attack on the leading Soviet biologist, the third such attack to occur in the Moscow press in recent months, marks an abrupt about-face from the time of Stalin when Lysenko's theories were regarded as infallible.

Stalin liked Lysenko's theories because they supported Stalin's concept that an environment of proper indoctrination could mould all people into loyal communists. In 1948, the accepted orthodox theories of biology and heredity were discarded and Lysenko's views, backed by Stalin, were incorporated into a new Soviet doctrine on genetics called "Michurinism". During Stalin's lifetime, no one in the Soviet Union dared to criticize the biologist, although his theories were rejected by scientists throughout the Free World as unscientific and inspired by politics.

Criticism

Current Soviet press criticism of Lysenko began last March when **Pravda** accused him of making a "mockery of Soviet science". Shortly afterward his theory of crop rotation was condemned by Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Soviet communist party. Khrushchev charged that Lysenko had taken a sound agricultural practice—on grass rotation with food grains—and distorted it beyond all reason. Millions of hectares of marginal land that should have remained in grass were put into grain, Khrushchev said, with the result that grain production did not increase and a shortage developed in grass fodder for livestock.

Some observers see in the current attack on Lysenko a move by the Malenkov regime to find a scapegoat for the poor harvest in the Soviet Union. Summing up its criticism of Lysenko, the **Journal of General Biology** said his so-called evidence that one species changed into another, such as pines into spruce, had been found "clearly falsified", and the "evidence

of the transformation of wheat into barley and rye into oats lacked verification".

Concerning Lysenko's claims that hard wheat could be transformed by environment into soft wheat, the **Journal** suggested that this was not a "transformation" but the ordinary results of unstable hybridization of seed.

Centuries Old Methods Turn Swamp Into Fertile Land

Drainage methods, practised during many centuries, are now being used to turn a big swamp in the Fraser Valley, Canada, into fertile land. This swamp, surrounded by tumbled-down dikes, is 30 miles east of Vancouver.

The team of enterprising Netherlands farmers who are working together for this purpose will, if successful (and it looks as if they are), eventually turn the land into an important supplier of dairy and agricultural products to Vancouver, the third largest city in Canada.

CONNIVING CHARGE ON U.S. BUTTER

Britain was conniving with European countries to accept America's surplus butter, Mr. H. T. Strong said recently.

Mr. Strong is director of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

He was speaking at the Agricultural Bureau of Congress at Hawkesbury.

Mr. Strong said: "Britain is not receiving surplus U.S. butter herself.

"She has more or less given her approval to some European nations to accept disposal butter.

"Those countries look towards Britain for guidance."

Mr. Strong said Britain should keep to long-term agreements and encourage other countries to do the same.

"Otherwise the stability of the world butter market will go", he said.

Mr. Strong said the ability of a big section of the world to increase the production of tree oils and fats was threatening Australia's overseas butter market.

Big technical advances in margarine production provided another threat.

He said: "We must develop an expanding market for Australia's other dairying products.

"This can be done by increasing efficiency in processing and distribution.

"We are able to make the world's best cheese in Australia."

Plan for raising wheat quality

(Continued from Page 4)

As with all new activities, there will be initial difficulties to overcome, but these will not be overcome by running away from them, as seems to be the tendency. It is believed that the difficulties are much greater in anticipation than they will prove to be in reality. But in Australian interests, as well as in the growers', it is essential that the leaders who have been entrusted with the marketing of West Australian wheat should overcome them.

Because of the additional work associated with the operation of two concurrent pools instead of one, and also because of their admiration for a marketing system which deals with only one class of wheat, the policy of the marketing leaders has been to make no change but to encourage the production of stronger varieties until the general strength of Australian wheat has been raised to a higher level.

Saving Markets

Such a policy is admirable but it resembles very closely the attitude of the improvident farmer who says, "Live sheep, till the grass grows". When natural pasture is scanty or absent the provident farmer feeds the sheep to save them. Acting on the same sound principle, if Australia wishes to save her Eastern markets she will have to supply the stronger wheat and flour they are now demanding. To be able to do this growers must be encouraged to grow the stronger wheats by "Payment for Quality". This wheat must be handled and marketed separately to supply those markets which have shown that they intend to buy "on quality".

In this third new "wheat quality" era it rests with the handling and marketing authorities to make the existing limited practice of "Payment for Quality" a general one available to all growers and in all districts.

RUM JUNGLE

(Continued from Page 9)

Old Batchelor Farm

Back at Batchelor, I had a look at the site of the old Experimental Demonstration Farm established by Administrator Gilruth about 1912.

An incredible number of minor disasters, it would seem combined to close the experiment as a failure. The prize cattle develop tick. The dip, sent to cure them of tick, poisoned them, when they licked it. The train rushing antidote to their rescue jumped the rails and shattered every bottle of antidote. When a bush fire approached the poultry run, the keeper was hopelessly intoxicated, and all the prize poultry were burnt. When the sorghum crop was being harvested, the horse bolted and the harvesting machine had to be written off. There were other similar incidents. Some claim, that the sole product of the farm was an outsize pumpkin, hailed as the £60,000 pumpkin — and this prize specimen was stolen! Whatever was the muddling in those days, today Batchelor is outstanding for its efficiency and capable administration.

Sunday

Next morning, I offered Sunday Mass in one of the large cool class rooms of the Public School, afterwards attended a meeting of the parish committee, with further discussions about St. Barbara's; I blessed a newly purchased car for an Italian miner, christened an infant born ten days before in the Darwin Hospital, visited more of the parishioners, had lunch and drove back to Darwin.

In the car, I could not help thinking how convenient was the place at which uranium had presented itself. In contrast to the inaccessibility of most other important world deposits, Rum Jungle Mine is ideally situated. It lies alongside the Larrimah-Darwin Railway, and only a few miles from the first-class bitumen highway, leading to the deep water port at Darwin. The wartime airstrip, capable of coping with the heaviest of

planes, is adjacent to the town. As well as Crater Lake nearby, Manton Dam, Darwin's water storage reservoir is only 15 miles away. There are no serious local hazard in regard to health and safety.

Reflections

I thought, too, of Rum Jungle Uranium as a source of atomic power, capable of producing tremendous explosions, powerful enough to destroy any of our capital cities, and that stockpiles of these death-dealing devices were held by mighty nations.

There is only one force powerful enough to restrain and direct atomic power, and that is prayer: for in prayer we have a power mightier than any force that can be devised by the most brilliant panel of scientists — "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"—Tennyson reminds us.

Prayer opens our souls to the influx of God's Grace, and creates spiritual chain reactions in the souls of others. There is no more perfect setting for launching the chain reactions of prayer than a church, a power house of prayer, where can be offered the greatest prayer—the Sacrifice of the Mass.

It is most appropriate and necessary then, that St. Barbara's of Batchelor—just such a power house—should be to the fore, early and always in the life of this centre of powerful radio-activity.

Recent Progress

There has been continued progress and development since the above lines were penned early this year. The

building construction has greatly increased, so that about 80 homes are finished as well as the hostels for single people, the civic centre and recreational facilities, and in the meantime the population has reached about the thousand mark. The township is nicely being erected on up-to-date, progressive lines, backed by ample funds from commonwealth source.

The Catholic community is not a large one but its members feel bound to make some provision for the future and erect a church in keeping with the high standard set by the rest of the town.

The materials for the entire building were supplied by Bowas Construction Company and were brought to Darwin from Sydney on the first run of the "Wangarra" in 238 crates and packages. Work at the site began immediately. The tradesmen were assisted by voluntary labour wherever possible. The work was sufficiently advanced for Bishop O'Loughlin to offer the first Mass in the partially completed church on Sunday, May 16th.

On the same day, two truck loads of Bathurst Island natives visited Batchelor. They presented an interesting afternoon's entertainment with spear throwing, native dances, (the crocodile, buffalo and spitfire dance were among their repertoire), an exhibition of high jumping at which they show more than usual prowess—several of the party could clear over 6 feet without shoes of any kind.

This was their practical effort towards the money raising campaign to pay for St. Barbara's.

QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY

When the Chairman of the S.A. Advisory Board of Agriculture resigned recently, he told farmers that "if we watch quality as well as efficiency, we can weather any of the storms which face us today."

"The world's population", said Mr. Short, "is increasing, and although we may face a period of stringency, our markets are increasing each year so greatly that they must hold the solution of all our agricultural marketing problems today."

"We need have no fear in facing markets with wider choice and power in discrimination, provided we watched quality as well as cost and efficiency in production."

MEMBERSHIPS 1954-1955

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